



The Foreside Community Church United Church of Christ

September 2024

Connecting to God ~ Nurturing Community ~ Discovering how our Lives Make a Difference



“Mocktails on the Patio” and a wind down, regroup from the summer. A big shout out to Debra Coyman for facilitating another successful, and what is now an annual event at FCC. See you next year!

THE FORESIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH, UCC
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Pastoral Notes

Discovering Oneness

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. - 2 Corinthians 5:17–20

I am so grateful to be back among you in our community, and for the time away this summer on sabbatical. Thank you for your support and prayers both in rest and renewal, and in the joy of regathering!

The most profound gifts from my time away came from reconnecting with people and places from my past, especially with our daughter, Grace. I found myself stirred by this reconnecting—re-membering, maybe—parts of my past life I had come to feel removed or separate from, and by a new sense of unity and union with beloved friends and memories... deepened by seeing them anew through Grace's eyes.

Maybe you have had some of this experience, too? ...some characters or chapters that have been severed from full integration with your life story, yet are longing for reconnection and healing? As I reflected on this, I was struck Paul's invitation to the Corinthians (and to me) to share in a "ministry of reconciliation."

I walked and enjoyed my own "thin places" on the earth, and found—though in the past I had often been taught that we are distinct from creation, rather than part of it—a deep connection, unity, and belonging.

I talked with and found deep meaning with people I have loved, but whose lives are wholly different than my own, I thought how much I am enriched

by the gift of diverse thought, language, and culture.

And as I sought the hard work of rest and renewal, I found a contented wholeness.

Someone recently reminded me Fr. Richard Rohr's *Universal Christ*, which we have studied from time to time here. In it, Rohr evokes Christ as the source and experience of what he calls a "cosmic unity," an experience of oneness. Reading through the lens of my time away, I found reconciliation everywhere:

God loves things by uniting with them, not by excluding them...

The proof that you are a Christian is that you can see Christ everywhere else...

... a universally available "voice" that calls all things to become whole and true to themselves...

...Salvation might best be called "restoration."^[1]

I think, in a time of great rupture and divisions, we in the church—and maybe particularly here where "community" is literally our middle name—are called to be a house of prayer for and in service of reconciliation. **I wonder, in the year ahead, how our communion might be deepened by practices and patterns of ministry seeking:**

To reconcile ourselves as a human race with the fabric of all creation of which we are a part.

To reconcile ourselves with neighbors and others, seeking greater understanding and connection across difference.

And, indeed, to be reconciled to ourselves internally, finding wholeness and healing in body and mind.

(cont. on next page)

(cont.)

This fall, I'll hope you'll join in some of our activities around the theme, *How Shall We Pray?* and reflect some on how we are called to live lives of prayer and service, but lives which rediscover the one-ness of all creation that God longs for us to share in. In worship, we'll be exploring the meaning, instruction, and invitation of the prayer which Jesus taught us, and which we now call the Lord's prayer. On Tuesday mornings, I'll be exploring centering prayer as a meditative practice. I hope you'll read on for all the other many events as we

What a gift to be entrusted with this ministry—and this deep hope—of God's reconciling love for all things... for a time such as this.

1 Rohr, Richard. *The Universal Christ: How a Forgotten Reality Can Change Everything We See, Hope For, and Believe* (pgs. 16, 51, 83, 28). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition. [↪](#)



Worship in the sanctuary...

...and attendance on Sundays is open to all with the following protocols in place:

- Mask wearing is voluntary (a supply can be located in the narthex).
- We ask households to give each other good social distance.
- Windows will be opened enough to increase ventilation.
- Worship continues to also be live-streamed for attending convenience by going to:

[https://www.youtube.com/
ForesideCommunityChurch](https://www.youtube.com/ForesideCommunityChurch)

Bulletins for each service, including words to that day's hymns are also posted at the above website address.

On the road and missing a sermon? Want to go back and revisit any one sermon? Want to share a sermon with a friend or family member? Pastor Geoff's sermons in both written and audio form from May 2019 and including Easter services (minus "Prayers on the Patio") can be viewed and/or heard on FCC's website at:

[http://www.foresidechurch.org/
index.php/category/sermons/](http://www.foresidechurch.org/index.php/category/sermons/)

Supporting the Ministry of FCC

As we work to continue to offer ministry inside and out of our congregation in a time of so much instability, we would invite you consider how you can continue to support our work in the world. Please know that if you would like to mail a gift or regular pledge payment to the church office, the office will be open to receive that gift.

If you would like to make a one time gift online, or if you would like create an account for a monthly recurring gift, you may do so through PayPal by going to our [giving page](#) and clicking the "Donate" button.

Thank you for the ways you share from your lives and empower the ministry of the church, offering connection, nurturing, and support here and in the wider world!



Tuesday Morning Centering Prayer Group

Following up on Pastor Cheryl's spring class on mindfulness meditation, come and join with Pastor Geoff and others as we explore the practice and ideas of *centering prayer*, another meditative practice from the contemplative Christian tradition.

No prior experience is necessary.

Join us beginning September 17th
and the following Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m. in the parlor

Questions? Contact [Pastor Geoff](#)

“Life After Doom” by Brian McLaren Book Study and Conversation with the Author through the BTS Center

Tuesdays 4:00pm - 5:15pm (Eastern) • Online

October 15 – November 19, 2024

Registration: \$50 program fee

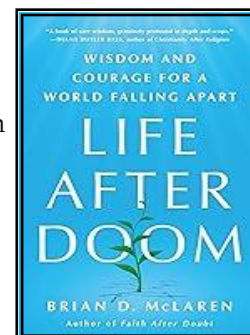
Includes a copy of Life After Doom for the first 100 people who register.

As we wade more deeply into the realities of climate change, and as the instability of our systems and structures becomes more apparent, we are confronted with many possibilities for what the future may hold – and all those scenarios, to varying degrees, hold suffering and darkness as well as potential for healing and transformation. The work of holding these unknown worlds while actively working toward a better future can be lonely, especially when the scaffolding of our systems feels inadequate at best and actively harmful at worst. How do we look honestly at what is while envisioning a way forward for ourselves, our communities, and our world?

In *Life After Doom: Wisdom and Courage for a World Falling Apart*, widely celebrated author, speaker, and theologian Brian McLaren offers wisdom rooted in the deep traditions and practices of Christianity to meet this transformational moment in history. Without shying away from the realities we face, and with compassion and humor, he invites us to radically reimagine our lives and our world toward a sustaining future rooted in love, simplicity, and community.

This fall, The BTS Center is pleased to offer a book study focused on *Life After Doom*. Over five weeks, led by two skilled facilitators, we will engage with this powerful text together, gaining insight and fortitude with and from one another. These gatherings will offer a space to ask and hold the difficult questions within a community of care so that we may have the courage to step into our own work in these uncertain times.

All who register for the book study will automatically be registered for Life After Doom: A Conversation with Brian McLaren – an online public event on Wednesday, October 30 at 7pm (Eastern).



UPDATES, REPORT OUTS, AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Prayers on the Patio, Reflecting Back

Prayers on the patio on July 7, 2024 were led by me, John Bischof, in pleasant, sunny weather with about thirty in attendance. The reflections started off with a reference to my friend Howard, whom I first knew as an agnostic Jew but who died a devout Episcopalian. Howard had said, “You don’t find it. It finds you.” My thoughts were that it is often a two-way street – it can find us, but we also can and should search for it. ---- There was a lot of good sharing in the prayer time. ----- The atmosphere of the gathering was one of palpable joy and love.

Prayers on the Patio July 14, 2024 led by Kathie McCatherin, proved to be a steamy, hot day so the decision was made to move the service from the patio into the sanctuary. The service was well attended and attendees felt comfortable as the fans whirred in the background. The sermon was a recap of my experience of a landslide in Taiwan and the service reflected themes of surrender, acceptance and gratitude. I chose “Joy Is Like the Rain,” a childhood favorite, as one of our music selections. It was readily learned by those in attendance. For the scripture I chose the 23rd Psalm which was the perfect complement to the themes of the morning.

The congregation that morning was attentive and welcoming as I spoke of the harrowing details of my experience in Taiwan. They were eager to hear of the events that unfolded on April 3, 2024 as my son, Jamie, and I climbed high into the mountains in his car. I highlighted my deep feelings of gratitude and appreciation for the many who helped along the way. I also spoke of the



peace and serenity I felt in the midst of the tumult as I surrendered to a situation where human control and agency were utterly impossible.

After the service many approached to share their appreciation for my heartfelt rendering of the story and for sharing the lessons I learned as I faced one of the most consequential challenges of my life. Several suggested I publish the story. I’m thinking about submitting it to Guidepost but it might be a bit long for their guidelines. We’ll see! In the meantime, [click here for “Landslide Learnings.”](#)

Thank you, all, for your kind words, support and interest in my story! I hope it held some inspiration for you that enhanced your own faith and wellbeing.

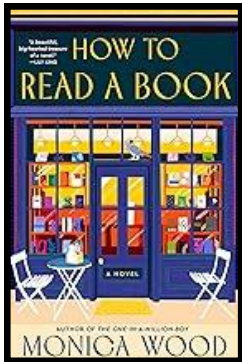
July’s Full Moon Inspires July 21 Prayers on the Patio Service Inspired by the anticipated rising of July’s full moon on Sunday, July 21, the Green Team’s Prayers on the Patio service that morning recalled the extraordinary live radio transmission back to Earth from space in 1968. Three Apollo 8 astronauts broadcast a Christmas Eve message heard by an estimated one out of every four people on Earth as they orbited the moon and read from the Book of Genesis. It was later, on the same lunar mission, that Air Force Major Bill Anders captured the iconic photo of Earth rising, giving humanity its first picture of our planet and a new perspective of our place in the universe.

A number of the almost forty worshipers joining Green Team members for the outdoor July service read aloud a litany of reflections that astronauts from many countries have shared of their privileged travels in space. During the interactive service, participants reflected on their own cherished experiences that evoked awe. They also meditated on how awe can change our lives, as it did for Jacob in the morning’s Scripture reading, Genesis 28: 12-17.

At the conclusion of the service, Green Team member Dana Humphreys introduced those Green Team members who helped lead the service and invited anyone interested to join in planning and hosting future educational programs and worship experiences focused on environmental sustainability and our relationship with the natural world. The committee will return to regular meetings in the fall.

(Left to right) Green Team members Dana Humphreys, Janette Gustafson, Kathie McCatherin, Sue Clark, Susan Gilpin, Nancy Olmstead, Deb Reifsnnyder

UPDATES, REPORT OUTS, AND UPCOMING EVENTS (cont.)



The Foreside Book Group We will reconvene on September 18 with our next pick Monica Woods newest book, How to Read a Book. It sounds like another good one by a favorite Maine writer. Here is a summary from Barnes and Noble.

"Violet Powell, a twenty-two-year-old from rural Abbott Falls, Maine, is being released from prison after serving twenty-two months for a drunk-driving crash that killed a local kindergarten teacher. Harriet Larson, a retired English teacher who runs the prison book club, is facing the unsettling prospect of an empty nest. Frank Daigle, a retired machinist, hasn't yet come to grips with the complications of his marriage to the woman Violet killed.

When the three encounter each other one morning in a bookstore in Portland—Violet to buy the novel she was reading in the prison book club before her release, Harriet to choose the next title for the women who remain, and Frank to dispatch his duties as the store handyman—their lives begin to intersect in transformative ways.

How to Read a Book is an unsparingly honest and profoundly hopeful story about letting go of guilt, seizing second chances, and the power of books to change our lives. With the heart, wit, grace, and depth of understanding that has characterized her work, Monica Wood illuminates the decisions that define a life and the kindnesses that make life worth living." Barnes and Noble

FMI: mimihinkel@gmail.com

Fellowship Welcome Back Potluck!

Save the date 9/15/24

It is time for everyone in The Foreside Community Church to gather and celebrate, to share summer stories, find out who wins the Bingo prizes and renew our church community. On **Sunday September 15 after church service**, we will gather for our annual potluck. There will be fun activities for those young in age or young in heart. **We are planning on it being outside weather depending, if not, in downstairs!**

Fellowship is asking that attendees (last name) A-G bring a side dish, H-P bring a dessert, and Q-Z bring an entree. Of course, if you have a dish you bring every year and it would not be the same without, feel free to bring that instead. The hope is to have a nice variety. **Fellowship and CE will provide the beverages.**

SET-UP will take place on Saturday, September 14 at 5:00 p.m. Fellowship is in need of a group of able-bodied carriers to help move the tables and chairs. It should only take half an hour if enough people come to help. Please consider helping with the set-up and then join in the fun on Sunday. Any questions about the food contact Liz Ventre eventre1@maine.rr.com.

(pictured below) **The Goodrich granddaughters celebrating with a hike in Jackson Hole, Wyoming after completing their FCC BINGO cards! Have you turned yours in? The deadline is Tuesday, September 3rd. ([Click here for link to card.](#))**



UPDATES, REPORT OUTS, AND UPCOMING EVENTS (cont.)

September Mission Moment Announced

On Sunday, September 22nd FCC is pleased to welcome Karen Campbell, Family Resource Specialist for Kids Peace (www.kidspeace.org), a private charity dedicated to serving the behavioral and mental health needs of children, families and communities. Founded in 1882, KidsPeace provides a unique psychiatric hospital; a comprehensive range of residential treatment programs; accredited educational services; and a variety of foster care and community-based treatment programs to help people in need overcome challenges and transform their lives. The experts at KidsPeace provide emotional and physical health care and educational services in an atmosphere of teamwork, compassion and creativity. KidsPeace offers residential treatment services in Pennsylvania, Maine and Georgia. At its Graham Lake Campus in Ellsworth, ME, KidsPeace offers residential services for young people on the autism spectrum and youth requiring 24-hour clinical, residential and educational services and supervision.

Karen will be joining us afterwards for our Fellowship Coffee Hour to answer any additional questions while providing printed material for your individual read.



The Justice & Outreach Ministry hopes you will take this opportunity to hear this weighty and crucial message.



SAVE THE DATE
Thursday Evening, Sept. 26
Town of Falmouth Forum on Plastics

The Falmouth Conservation Commission will hold a free forum on Thursday evening, September 26 to share more about the dangers of plastics and how citizens can reduce their use of these products, deemed to have a hazardous role in human health.

The program — "Simply Turn Off Plastics" — will be held at the Falmouth High School Theater beginning at 6:30 p.m.

According to a recent New York Times article, plastic products contribute to our climate and biodiversity crises and are responsible for killing marine life by entering food chains or entangling animals. Plastic particles can now be found in soil, water, and air. Since the majority of them are produced with fossil fuels, they are responsible for 3.4 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions.

More information is available at the town's website — https://www.falmouthme.org/conservation-commission

Sunday School Starting Back Up!

We are excited to welcome back families for the beginning of the 2024/25 Sunday School year starting on September 15!

We can't wait to see you again!

FYI Wendy Tracy

Anyone interested in volunteering for Sunday School support is encouraged to join the info meeting shortly following worship on Sunday, September 8 in the large classroom. No commitment required. Just come and listen, you might be surprised how fun this can be!

UPDATES, REPORT OUTS, AND UPCOMING EVENTS (cont.)



Nick Bezanson, Lendall Smith, Phil Gleason and Chuck de Sieyes split the wood from the church maple tree that came down to make way for the Memorial Garden. **It will be for sale at the Christmas Fair - 2 1/2 cords!** And Lendall Smith is a professional, having been briefly a member of the In-

ternational Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulfite and Papermill Workers, when he worked for Pejepscot Paper Company, between the army and law school! And, he was working in 1962, the last year trees were floated down the Androscoggin River as log runs.



The Christmas Fair is right around the corner!

Seriously, it's not too soon to start thinking about how **YOU** will contribute to our holiday celebration. Its festive, fun, and helps pay our electric bill.

Starting on September 5th we will be gathering in the fellowship at **1:00 p.m.** every Thursday to sort donations and plan for the **big annual Fair event, this year scheduled for Saturday, December, December 6th.** If you have donations, bring them. If you have time, come work. If you need ideas about how you could contribute, come talk to us. There is a place at the fair for everyone, whether in person or behind the scenes!

Eclipse Glasses Collection A Success
(S. Somes)

As you may remember, I

facilitated a collection of used solar eclipse glasses several months ago. The purpose was to provide these much needed safety aids to the organization **Safe Passage** (<https://www.safepassage.org>) located in Guatemala. Safe Passage is "...a progressive school dedicated to breaking the cycle of poverty through education, healthcare, nutrition, and social services." I had the great fortune earlier to join a volunteer team traveling to SP from Greely High School with our youngest daughter in 2014. The experience has stayed with me since. The school is now preparing for their solar eclipse event over Latin America scheduled for this October. I received about 30 pairs of glasses from friends and members of the church, and in combination with the schools in Cumberland/North Yarmouth, was able to hand off over 200 pairs at Safe Passage. I wish I could thank each of you individually for your donation, albeit small to you, it is amazing what a difference we make when we work together. Thank you.



Signing up for sanctuary arrangements, and/or facilitating a Sunday after service coffee hour...



...is a very generous, and greatly appreciated way to show support and fellowship at FCC. Sign-up sheets for both these activities have been updated and are now located on clipboards in the narthex.

If everyone took one Sunday to provide arrangements or refreshments, no one would have to do it more than once a year!

September Birthday Greetings

Virgo ~ Virgos are logical, practical, and systematic in their approach to life. Virgo is an earth sign historically represented by the goddess of wheat and agriculture, an association that speaks to Virgo's deep-rooted presence in the material world. This earth sign is a perfectionist at heart and isn't afraid to improve skills through diligent and consistent practice.

Liz Dodson ~ 1

John Kipp ~ 6

Marilyn Reynolds ~ 6

Jean Hubbell ~ 7

Mary Davies ~ 9

Barbara Saabye ~ 15

Phyllis Hewett ~ 16

Libra ~ Balance, harmony, and justice define Libra energy. As a cardinal air sign, Libra is represented by the scales (interestingly, the only inanimate object of the zodiac), an association that reflects Libra's fixation on establishing equilibrium. Libra is obsessed with symmetry and strives to create equilibrium in all areas of life — especially when it comes to matters of the heart.

Barry Somes ~ 28

Let's do (a continental)

Breakfast Ladies!

Women of the church, members and friends are invited to breakfast on

Wednesday, September 18 @ 8:30 a.m.

in the FCC coffee area,

we'll provide the food,

you bring your appetite.

~ good food, good conversation ~

it's a great way to start your day!

Please RSVP to

jfox10@maine.rr.com

The Men's Breakfast...

will be held

Saturday, September 14 @ 8:30 a.m.

at the church

An enjoyable repast and lively discussions are always on the menu!

FMI John Bischof


jegbischof@gmail.com or 781-2391

The October edition of *Steeplenotes* material submittal deadline is Saturday, September 21, 2024

Submitted articles should be final and print ready, pictures complete with captions in jpeg format can be included. Thank you.

September 2024

Be sure to check the calendar at The Foreside Community Church's website
www.foresidechurch.org for any updates or changes.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:30 a.m. hybrid service & Communion See pg. 3 for link.		3 Turn in Bingo Card! 6:15 pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45 pm AA 7:15 pm Bell Rehearsal	4	5 1 pm Christmas Fair Prep Fellowship Hall 6 pm AA	6	7
8 9:30 a.m. hybrid service & pulpit guest Sunday School Volunteers mtg. after worship ~ large classroom	9	10 12 pm Knitters 6:15 pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45 pm AA 7:15 pm Bell Rehearsal	11 6:30 pm Green Team 7 pm Finance Ministry Mtg.	12 1 pm Christmas Fair Prep Fellowship Hall 6 pm AA	13	14 8:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast ~ Pg. 9 5 pm Potluck Set up
15 9:30 a.m. hybrid service AND WELCOME BACK POTLUCK! See pg. 6 for details.	16	17 9 am Centering Prayer 12 pm Knitters 6:15 pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45 pm AA 7:15 pm Bell Rehearsal	18 8:30 am Women's Breakfast~See pg. 9 for details. 4 pm FCC Book Club~pg. 6 for details	19 1 pm Christmas Fair Prep Fellowship Hall 6 pm AA	20 <i>11 am</i> <i>Hope Bramhall Memorial</i>	21 October Steeplenotes material submittal deadline
22 9:30 a.m. hybrid service MISSION MOMENT "KidsPeace." See pg. 7 for details.	23 7 pm Governing Brd. Meeting	24 9 am Centering Prayer 12 pm Knitters 6:15 pm Choir Rehearsal 6:45 pm AA 7:15 pm Bell Rehearsal	25 Church office opening @ 10:30 a.m.	26 1 pm Christmas Fair Prep Fellowship Hall 6 pm AA	27 Church office opening @ 10:30 a.m.	28
29 9:30 a.m. hybrid service See pg. 3 for link.	30					

Daily Lectionary Readings for September 2024

Sun., Sept. 1

Song of Solomon 2:8-13
 Psalm 45:1-2, 6-9
 James 1:17-27
 Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Mon., Sept. 2

Psalm 144:9-15
 Song of Solomon 3:6-11
 1 Timothy 4:6-16

Tues., Sept. 3

Psalm 144:9-15
 Song of Solomon 5:2—6:3
 1 Peter 2:19-25

Wed., Sept. 4

Psalm 144:9-15
 Song of Solomon 8:5-7
 Mark 7:9-23

Thurs., Sept. 5

Psalm 125
 Proverbs 1:1-19
 Romans 2:1-11

Fri., Sept. 6

Psalm 125
 Proverbs 4:10-27
 Romans 2:12-16

Sat., Sept. 7

Psalm 125
 Proverbs 8:1-31
 Matthew 15:21-31

Sun., Sept. 8

Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23
 Psalm 125
 James 2:1-10 [11-13] 14-17
 Mark 7:24-37

Mon., Sept. 9

Psalm 73:1-20
 Proverbs 8:32—9:6
 Hebrews 11:29—12:2

Tues., Sept. 10

Psalm 73:1-20
 Proverbs 11:1-31
 Hebrews 12:3-13

Wed., Sept. 11

Psalm 73:1-20
 Proverbs 14:1-9
 Matthew 17:14-21

Thurs., Sept. 12

Psalm 19
 Proverbs 15:1-17
 Hebrews 11:17-22

Fri., Sept. 13

Psalm 19
 Proverbs 19:24-29
 James 2:17-26

Sat., Sept. 14

Psalm 19
 Proverbs 21:1-17
 Matthew 21:23-32

Sun., Sept. 15

Proverbs 1:20-33
 Psalm 19 or Wisdom 7:26—8:1
 James 3:1-12
 Mark 8:27-38

Mon., Sept. 16

Psalm 73:21-28
 Proverbs 22:1-21
 Romans 3:9-20

Tues., Sept. 17

Psalm 73:21-28
 Proverbs 25:1-28
 Colossians 3:1-11

Wed., Sept. 18

Psalm 73:21-28
 Proverbs 29:1-27
 John 7:25-36

Thurs., Sept. 19

Psalm 1
 Proverbs 30:1-10
 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

Fri., Sept. 20

Psalm 1
 Proverbs 30:18-33
 Romans 11:25-32

Sat., Sept. 21

Psalm 1
 Ecclesiastes 1:1-18
 Matthew 23:29-39

Sun., Sept. 22

Proverbs 31:10-31
 Psalm 1
 James 3:13—4:3, 7-8a
 Mark 9:30-37

Mon., Sept. 23

Psalm 128
 Proverbs 27:1-27
 James 4:8-17

Tues., Sept. 24

Psalm 128
 Ecclesiastes 4:9-16
 James 5:1-6

Wed., Sept. 25

Psalm 128
 Ecclesiastes 5:1-20
 John 8:21-38

Thurs., Sept. 26

Psalm 124
 Esther 1:1-21
 Acts 4:13-31

Fri., Sept. 27

Psalm 124
 Esther 2:1-23
 Acts 12:20-25

Sat., Sept. 28

Psalm 124
 Esther 3:1-15
 Matthew 5:13-20

Sun., Sept. 29

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22
 Psalm 124
 James 5:13-20
 Mark 9:38-50

Mon., Sept. 30

Psalm 140
 Esther 4:1-17
 1 Peter 1:3-9



STEEPLENOTES

A Newsletter of

The Foreside Community Church, UCC

General Office Hours:
Monday through Friday
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

or unless otherwise posted

Office: 207-781-5880

E-mail: info@foresidechurch.org Web: www.foresidechurch.org

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